

## Selections: The long walk home

by Josephine Cotterill

**Activities author:** Adrian Tennant

**Level:** Flyers+

**Recommended age:** Grade 6, primary (11+)

**Time needed:** Indicated for each activity

**Type of English:** American

**Note:** These activities can be done one after the other, or separately. Some activities need to be done in sequence, i.e. you need to do Activity 1 before you do Activity 2.

### Activity 1 (10 minutes)

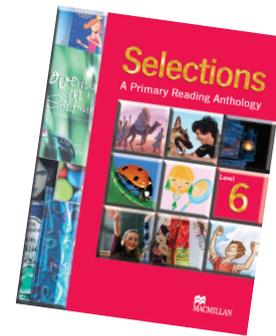
1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 1 and ask the children to spend a few minutes reading the questions and thinking of their answers.
2. Put the children into pairs or groups of three and ask them to discuss their answers.
3. Monitor and help where necessary.
4. After about five minutes or so, stop the activity and ask a few children to report back on their discussion.

### Activity 2 (10 minutes)

1. Hand out the worksheet.
2. Explain that you are going to play a recording of a story called *The long walk home* and that you want the children to think about the words they might hear in the story and then fill in the footprints with six words.
3. At this stage you might want to explain how to play 'bingo' – every time a student hears a word that is written in the box, they cross it out. If they cross out all six words they 'win'.
4. Give the children a minute or so to write their six words in the footprints.
5. Play the recording through once without stopping.
6. Watch carefully to see which children put up their hands.
7. After listening ask the children who put their hands up first to tell you the words they had on their card.

### Activity 3 (5-10 minutes)

1. Hand out the worksheet with Activity 3 or write the three questions on the board.



2. Put the children in pairs and ask them to discuss the three questions – can they remember the answers?
3. Play the recording of the first two verses (the answers are all in verse two, but by playing verse one you will help the children to 'tune in' and listen properly).
4. Ask the children to check their answers with their partner.
5. Check the answers as a class.

**Key:**

1. *school books*; 2. *sums*; 3. *water*

### Activity 4 (10-15 minutes)

1. Make enough copies of the transcript so there is one between three children.
2. Cut out the nine verses.
3. Put children in groups of three and give each group a copy of the cut out verses.
4. Ask the children to put the verses into the correct order.
5. Monitor and help where necessary.
6. Play the recording and ask the children to check their answers.
7. Finally, ask the children to read the whole poem in the correct order (you might want them to read this out loud).

### Activity 5 (10 minutes)

1. Ask the children to spend a few minutes reading through the questions and trying to remember the answers. Encourage them to discuss their ideas in pairs.
2. Play the recording through once (without stopping).

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- Put the children in pairs and ask them to answer the questions.
- Play the recording again, if necessary.
- Finally, check the answers as a class.

**Key:**

- afternoon (verse 1)
- windy, rainy and cold (verses 1 and 3).
- because he (thought he) saw a dragon (verse 4)
- the dragon (verse 5)
- he followed the dragon (verse 6)

- Keep the children in their groups of three to six and ask them to discuss their answers to the two questions with each other.
- Not all of the children will be able to answer the question but encourage those children to ask further questions to find out more from those who have an experience to share.
- Monitor and listen to a few of the discussions.
- Ask a few children to tell the class about either their own experience or one from another member of their group.

**Activity 6 (10-15 minutes)**

**Note:** This activity is especially good for children who are visual learners. It can be done at any stage after the main listening activities.

- Hand out the worksheet with Activity 6.
- Make sure the children have pencils (including colored ones).
- Tell the children they have ten minutes to draw the dragon that the boy in the poem saw.
- Afterwards put the drawings up on the walls and give the children a few minutes to look at the other pictures.

**Activity 7 (5-10 minutes)**

- Tell the children you want them to use their imagination.
- Either write up the activity on the board or hand out the worksheet with Activity 7.
- Tell the children to spend a couple of minutes thinking of their answers to the two questions.
- Put the children into groups of three to six and ask them to discuss their answers.
- Encourage the children to ask each other more questions about each others' answers.
- Monitor and listen to a few of the discussions.
- Ask a few children to tell the class about their group's discussion.

**Activity 8 (5-10 minutes)**

- Write the following questions on the board: *Have you ever seen something unusual when you've been out walking? What did you see?*

**Activity 9 (10 minutes)**

- Ask the children to spend a couple of minutes trying to match the words in the cloud to the correct definitions.
- Put the children in pairs and get them to check their answers together.
- Monitor and help where necessary.
- Check the answers as a class.

**Note:** You might want to extend this activity by asking the children if they can remember how the words were used in the poem, i.e. what was beating? (the boy's heart); what was stinging? (the icy wind on the boy's face); etc.

**Key:**

- howling; 2. stinging; 3. pace; 4. creep;
- footprint; 6. beating; 7. twig; 8. puddle

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# The long walk home

Written by Josephine Cotterill    Illustrated by Elsa Warnick

It was a rainy afternoon.  
The wind was wild and strong.  
The rain was getting in my eyes,  
The wind a howling song.

My backpack was full of school books,  
My head was full of sums,  
My boots so full of water,  
I couldn't even run.

Then as I lifted up my head  
Although the rain was in my eyes,  
Through the stinging of the icy wind  
I got a big surprise.

There in the winding road,  
Its tail hanging down,  
I saw a kind of dragon-thing  
Its back a golden brown.

I tried to see it clearly,  
I wiped the water off my face.  
But it took one long look at me  
And ran off at a rapid pace.

I followed it into the woods  
And saw its footprints clear.  
The prints were big and very deep,  
It must have been quite near.

I crept into the shadows  
My heart was beating fast.  
I followed a trail of broken twigs  
And the footsteps on the path.

I stepped very carefully  
And listened for strange sounds.  
At every turn I checked for clues  
Upon the puddled ground.

As the rain was beating down  
The footprints disappeared.  
The woods were dark and silent,  
There were no dragons here.



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## Before listening / reading

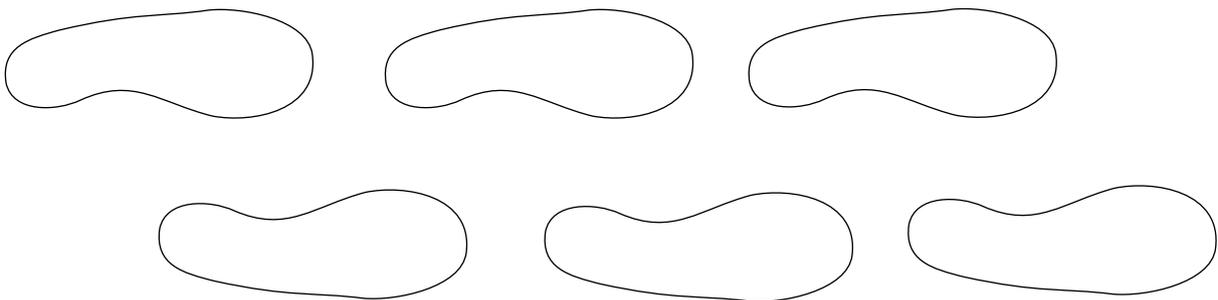
## Activity 1

Work with a partner or in groups of three. Discuss these questions:

1. Do you ever take long walks? When do you take them? Where do you go?
2. Which of these things do you do when you are walking?
  - sing to yourself
  - talk to friends
  - think
  - listen to music
  - look around you
3. When you go for a walk, is there anything else you do?
4. Do you like walking in the rain? Why / Why not?

## Activity 2

You are going to hear a story called *The long walk home*. Fill in the footprints with six words you think you will hear.



Now listen and cross out any of the words you hear. If you cross out all your words, put your hand up.

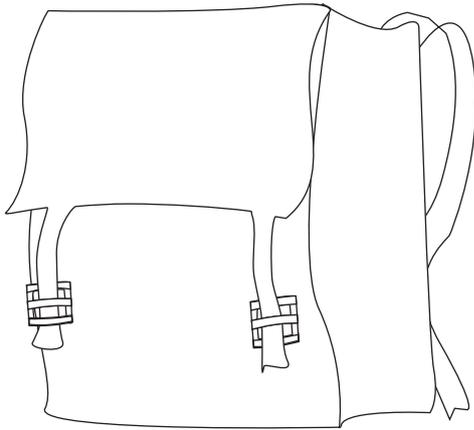
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Listen or read

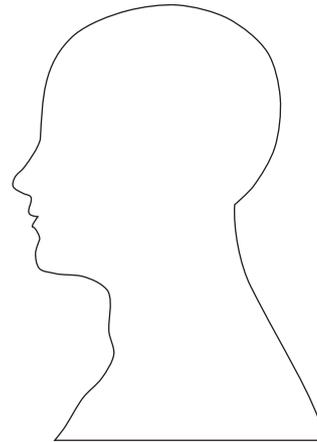
Activity 3

Before you listen again, see if you can remember the answers to these questions about the boy in the poem. Write your answer in the object under the question.

1. What was in his backpack?



2. What was his head full of?



3. What was in his boots?



Activity 5

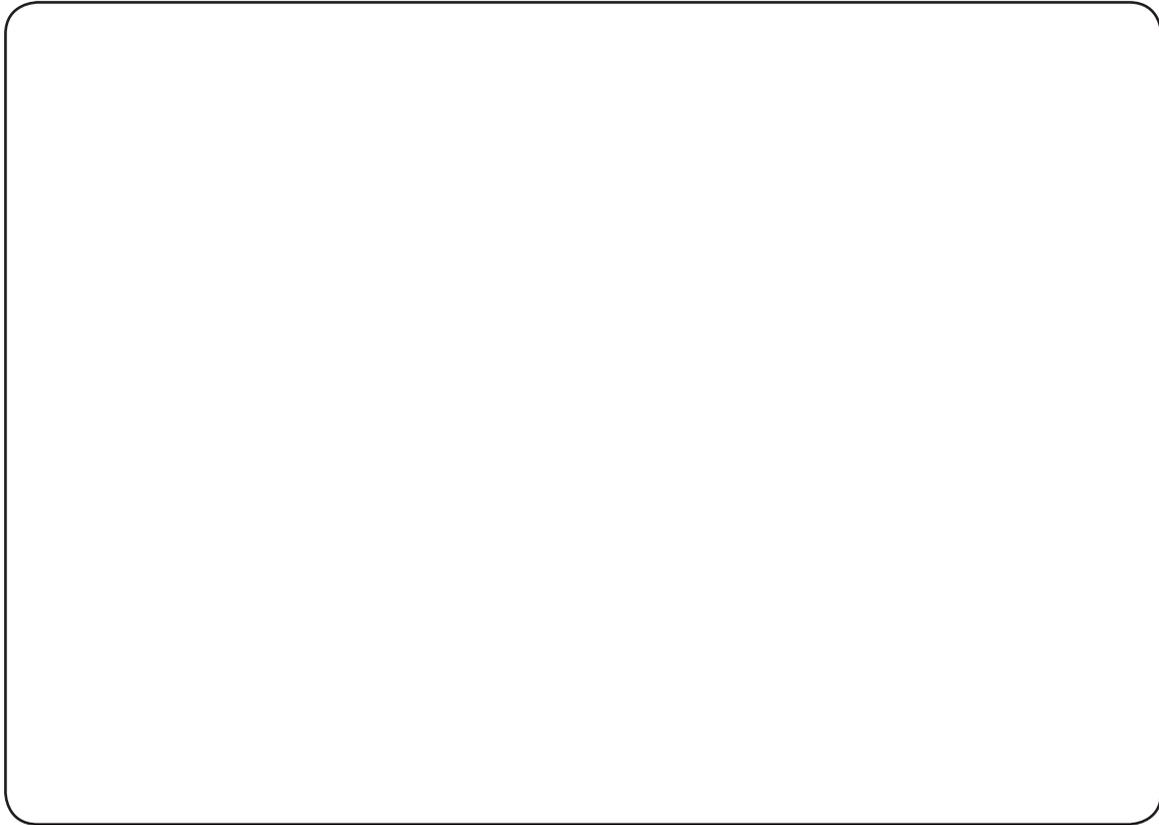
Listen again and answer the questions about the poem.

1. What time of day was it? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the weather like? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why was the boy surprised? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who ran away? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What did the boy do? \_\_\_\_\_

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Activity 6

Draw the dragon.



Activity 7

Imagine you were the boy in the story ...

What would you have felt?

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What would you have done?

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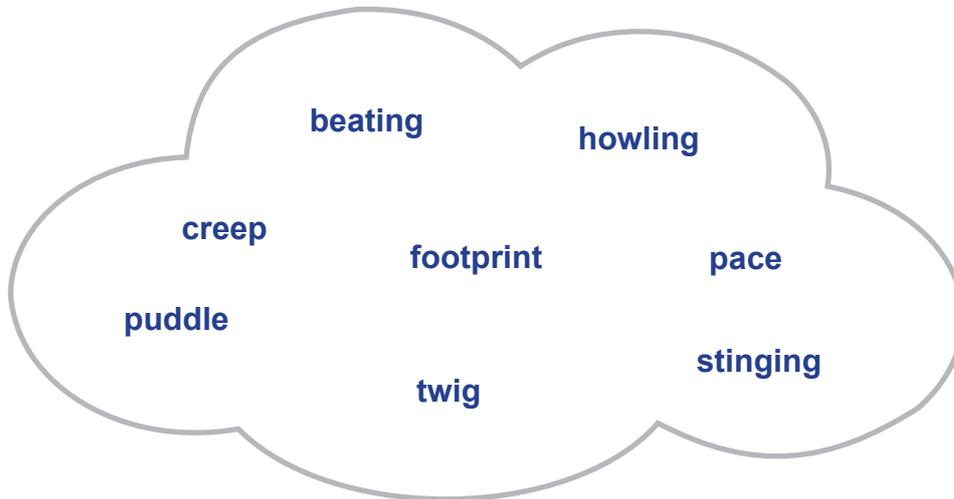
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## Activity 9

Match the words in the cloud from the poem to the correct definition (1-8).



1. a long loud sound made by an animal or the wind \_\_\_\_\_
2. a sore or uncomfortable feeling on your skin \_\_\_\_\_
3. the speed at which you walk or run \_\_\_\_\_
4. to move slowly and quietly \_\_\_\_\_
5. a mark made on the ground by a human or animal when they walk or run  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. making the same sound and movements again and again \_\_\_\_\_
7. a very small thin branch from a tree \_\_\_\_\_
8. a small pool of water, usually on the ground after rain \_\_\_\_\_